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THE NIGHT IS A TIME FOR CANDLES

by J.C. Cornell

He had come to the island with no thought of secking romance, for he was not a romantic man. Thus he had not been disappointed by the pollution and the noise, by the screaming traffic which raced away from the island's metropolis, headed always toward the sea. To escape this had not been his intention. He had wished to escape only the knowledge of what he was: a man of business, with obligations and contracts to make good, a man with the many responsibilities that had been avoided when he first entered the business. Then he had had no cause to worry on any point, for his father and his grandfather before him had constructed an empire as vast and as mighty as Rome itself, to be passed on in all its glory from generation to generation. They had accumulated sums that had then seemed inexhaustible; they had chosen for the top positions men whom they had known since childhood, men who had been all but born for the jobs they held.

But now he was at the top — a man with no son, no wife, no childhood friends, and he was tired of the suspicions which tortured him each time he met a new man:

"Jim, I'd like to introduce you to Jack Reddy. He's an up'n'coming, has an excellent record; the boys downstairs can't find a better, and I'll give you my personal G.N.T. as an honest man, you'd be a fool to lose him! And Jim, I just know you'll find him ve-rry——"

But the handshakes were always the same. He could almost feel the hunger in their fingers, these bright young executive types, ever eager to lodge themselves, cyst-like, in the company clockworks — and willing to sabotage them if all else failed. Time after time he was left cold, doubtful, and, while the fiend within him grew ever stronger, making him increasingly watchful, the foundations of the company were weakening from the strain, pried out from under by the tugging fingers of his suspicion. Conversations stopped abruptly when he entered the room, and glances were

exchanged between employees, the meanings of which he could only guess at in terror:

"Did you hear he fired Miss Struklin? Yes, dear, that nice child who worked for General Motors as the President's personal secretary. Lord, didn't you hear what he called her? That poor girl will never get another place as long as he's around, that's for surc..."

"I think he's gone paranoid, that's what I think! Why, he sacked Ol' Rusty — and if he can't trust Rusty — Christ! he's part of the Ol' Boy's train — nobody's safe. If you ask me, I think that the Cummings boy would be much better than that nutty duck, even if he is the old man's son..."

"Well, I've heard it all now. He just kicked Mr. Percy. You know, the fifth floor janitor. Says he was selling company secrets. The *janitor*, mind you, who can't even read! Did you ever. ...?"

These voices and others would follow him through the whole building, even into the executive board meetings, which had gradually lost that fine dignity of control to which they had been accustomed in his grandfather's day—

"For God's sake, I tell you I'm doing fine! Fine! And I'll do as I like: I'm the bloody boss around here!"

It was a cry torn from a desperate, despairing man, who grasped the table's edge as his father before him had never done, a man who glared insanely at a group of puzzled old men, who shared his every secret, and yet were little more than strangers.

And so he had come to the island, determined to remain a loner, to fix them all by simply selling off the business to the highest bidder. And he would handle it coldly, rationally, indifferently. He would simply retire, disappear, and leave the rest, but for his signature, for the lawyers to attend to.

So he made the necessary arrangements. Feverishly, nervously, with a sense of committing an irrevocable wrong, he had

placed a call to the first law firm he had found in the directory, his fingers twitching on the table as he listened to the phone ring, ring, ring, on the other end, his voice high and unnatural when he finally received an answer. The fiend surfaced again, tempting him on to insanity with visions of A.J. Levine and all his sons, past and present, revealing his secrets to his outraged employees—

"You are the current owner of the law firm Scorbey, Corbitt, Levine and Sons?"

"I am."

"Would you mind telling the court exactly what the defendant said in his call to you on the evening of June 17?"

"Of course. I was preparing to lock up for the evening when the gentleman called, so I had to go back and answer the phone. The man on the other end sounded nervous, almost...criminally so, and thus, after he hung up, I felt it was my duty to check into the matter..."

The call had drained him, both physically and mentally. He left the stifling walls of the tiny hotel room and stepped out into the pulsing noise of that sea-surrounded city, feeling the warmth of anonymity flow around him like an all-concealing mist. In the dull yellow glow which streamed from the windows of an all-night pub he stopped, lit a cigarette, and leaned against the wall, hidden among the shadows from the waist up, a man with no face, no name. Everywhere, the silence was alive with the noises of the night, and the tolling of the churchbells from all parts of the city caused this silence to dance and quiver before him. Even the laughter from within left him lonely.

"So you came."

A man stood before him, fortyish, bald, mountainously fat, dressed inexpensively but well. He was breathing heavily, as if one of his slow movements drained him totally, as if with each of his languid gestures an ounce of his life's blood was lost upon the stones. This man was a stranger, unknown to him, and instinctively he sank farther back into the shadows.

"I wasn't sure you'd remember — not that you'd deliberately forget, mind, I never said that — but fifteen years is a long time..." The

man smiled broadly and leaned heavily against the lamppost, taking a cigar from his pocket and searching for a match. His voice was soothing and flowed like honey over the man in the shadows, who, as one in a trance, mechanically offered a light to the stranger before him.

"I felt a tad queazy, y'know, at first.... I didn't know you at all, really" — he laughed softly, as if this were the most unimportant of matters, rolling the lighted cigar between his thumb and forefinger so that the smoke rose in curling strings and disappeared into the night. "I don't suppose I really know you now, for that matter, do I? Well, it was youth's folly, as they say, the madness of young men..." again the soft laugh, the gentle smile, the slight upward inclination of the head.

"I've never made another such pact, you know, not before and certainly not since. I've grown...wiser, I guess they'd say, but we know, don't we? It's more of a claustrophobic kind of cautiousness. I wouldn't dream of meeting a perfect stranger fifteen years from this moment, no, not old cautious me, not step-softly George. But, then, I had to...put some faith somewhere, you know, young man, disenchanted with the world, slightly tippley, angry with all his...hypocritical, mercenary friends, fancying himself an idealist, a true-born poet in spirit." He paused and raised his smiling gaze toward the man whose face lay hidden in the dark shadow of the pub, whose identity was still unknown to him, as it would be forever.

"You know, I fancied we might, well, have a drop of something, tonight, you know, I...well, wanted to find out all about you, you know...l... But now, well... now you've come as I knew you would, you've... given show, so to speak. That's really quite enough for me." He straightened slowly up, away from the lamppost and extended his hand into the blackness before him.

"Well, good evening sir. And...thank you...."

From behind the shadows a man shook the hand of another man, a total stranger, and for a moment felt no twinge, heard no fiend shout aloud its frenzy within him.

Devil's Fool

Oh, my little angel,
Oh, my little fool,
Is that your little penny
Lying within the pool?

Oh, my little angel,
Oh, my little fool,
Don't you know that money
Is just the Devil's tool?

The Devil dwells among us, Oh, my little fool. The Devil uses you, my angel— The Devil, oh, so cruel.

Oh, my little darling,
Oh, my little fool,
You must obey the Devil's orders—
You must obey his rules.

Jump, my little angel,
Jump, oh, little fool.
You must retrieve the penny
Within the crystal pool.

The Devil desires the penny, Oh, my little fool. The Devil's wishes must be followed, The Devil, oh, so cruel.

—Ting S. Tse

"Lost In Blue"

Come a mournful feeling abrupt In the midst of a misty blue, That no song, no poem interrupt. It's the feeling of losing you.

-Phineas Chan

BEWARE THE DREAMS

Dreams so far away from sight So as to seem but mockeries Beriddle the quiet of the night It teems of endless inquiries.

Stand fast in resolutions ready-made, Hold tight the reins of Dreams Lest flickering Hopes too often weighed Cause pains whose sharp points gleam.

Sleep brings rest to those who need No Dream to fire their Life Nor Ambitions on which to feed the infernos of soul-torn strife.

Thus do dreams disband
To bring to us great sorrow,
For hand unto the hand
Do they to us bring morrow.

— Hazel Wong

Something

There is something I see in you...

Something I cannot comprehend.

Often it draws me to be with you.

And I'd wish this "something" would never end.

There is something I see in you... Something that holds me relentless. Some call it love and affection. But In the end, naming it is needless.

— Phineas Chan

Tranquility

Somebody come
Hold the bullet from
My head,
The blade from
My wrist.
Breath tranquility
Into my soul;
I'll no longer
Wish to die.

— Anonymous

A Visitor

by Paul Laurino

Seth Gordon shifted his school text-tape cassettes (special cassettes with schoolwork recorded on them) within his jumpsuit pocket as he sauntered along the final twenty yards of the dirt path, which he traveled each day when returning home from school. Ahead of him Seth saw the town—a depressing spectacle of decay and desolation. The walls of eccentrically shaped buildings stood smeared with streaks of dull gray and shades of dirty brown. Once-shimmering milk-white marble statues —half eaten away by the chemically polluted air-were now gloomy, decaying figures of green fungi and black mud. Seth was accustomed to this forsaken scene, so these unpleasantries went unnoticed as he continued on his way into the town.

The streets were deserted; the citizens had already retreated to their homes. Seth's classmates always arrived home from school before he did, for he enjoyed strolling through the woods. He appreciated the trees and flowers, although most were harshly rotted and withered, because to him they were the only half-beatiful things left on this forbidding planet Earth. All forms of animal life had long since been obliterated. But at the moment Seth was interested only in getting home. Suddenly, before he had taken two steps along the street, he was startled by a small tug at his suit from behind.

"Excuse me," spoke a meek voice.

Seth turned to face a strange-looking man. He was a tall, large-framed sinewy figure in his late 30's. These minor details registered only briefly in Seth's mind. The stranger's odd apparel was what really stood out. His clothes were different from any other Seth had ever seen, but then again the only garment Seth had ever seen was the jumpsuit, now worn by everyone. Basically the stranger wore separate garments above and below the waist, and he wore short boots.

"Excuse me," repeated the stranger in a much stronger tone, recalling Seth from his intense observations. "What is today's date?" "The seventh," Seth replied.

The stranger stared blankly at Seth, as though expecting him to continue. A few seconds passed, then the stranger tried again. "The month? Year?"

"October seventh, 2057," Seth responded to the odd request. He was tempted to stay and find out who the stranger was, but a glance at his wrist-chronometer quickly dispelled this temptation. If I want to be in before F Hour, I had better hurry, Seth thought. And to the stranger he said, "So long, I have to be going." Seth turned to go.

"Wait, please. I want to talk to you," called the stranger, catching up with Seth.

"Sure, but you're gonna have to tag along. I got to get inside," Seth said congenially. Seth began the conversation with "Who are you?"

"Richard Oxtonn. Just call me Rick," he answered, trying to break the ice between them. Rick continued, "Where is everyone?"

Big whoop. You're Richard Oxtonn. Who are you, is what I want to know. "They're inside," Seth responded. "Why? Lots of reasons. The young kids can't come out, of course, 'cause they aren't old enough to get their anti-rad shots. And the ..."

"What are anti-rad shots?" Rick interrupted.

Seth stopped in his tracks, dumbfounded. At first he had excused the stranger's failure to know the year as a severe case of absent-mindedness. But anyone who was unaware of what an anti-rad shot was was obviously, as Seth would put it, "missing something upstairs."

"Surely you've gotten one? Well, you must know about the radiation and the war. You don't?" Seth's eyes rolled backward.

At the sight of this, Rick became agitated. He then recited a shaky alibi. "Let me be frank with you. I'm really a government surveyor sent out to make sure that all towns are aware of the purpose and the importance of an anti-

rad shot." Rick mopped his brow.

Seth was intrigued. As a country boy, he had visualized the government as the powerful, glorious yet impersonal force that controlled the entire nation. Seth was thrilled at the prospect of actually taking part in the government. But Rick's credibility was still in doubt. Seth noticed a gold-lettered patch reading "G.S.R.C." on Rick's right sleeve. He questioned him about what the letters stood for.

Rick wavered, then replied, "Er ... well, Government Survey ... ah ... Research Commission." Speedily Rick changed the subject. "Now tell me, what is an anti-rad shot?"

Seth was convinced of the man's sincerity partly because he really wanted to believe he was actually speaking to a government official and partly because he was weary of questioning Rick about his identity. Readily he responded, "It's the first thing we learn in school. When a kid reaches seven, his body is strong enough to accept the anti-rad shot's vaccine. This vaccination helps to produce special leukocytes capable of destroying small amounts of radiation that enter the blood-stream. Since all the radiation is outside in the air, children under seven can't leave their houses." That about covers it, thought Seth.

"Why is there radiation in the air?" Rick asked.

"You think I'm an idiot? Because of the stupid war twenty years ago," he spoke passionately. "With so many damn bombs being busted all over the U.S., radiation spread all over the country like wildfire. 'Lowlevel radiation,' you guys in Washington said. Hell, it wiped out every bird, fish, and animal in the country. Take a look around, buddy. The trees, grass, flowers—they're dying too. And what about us? We've been reduced to cowering inside our houses so we won't soak up too much of the radiation. Forty. That's the average life expectancy of everybody. Meanwhile you good old guys in D.C. are telling us we'll be all right. Hah! Listen to the experts, mister. In 2070 they say there is going to be not one living thing left on this godforsaken planet." Seth was weeping hysterically, but he didn't care. He didn't want to

talk, he just wanted to be left alone. Rick knew this, and didn't press him to talk. He realized how Seth felt; he remembered his old home at Love Canal. . . .

There was a moment of silence. Then ... An earsplitting screech deafened two solemn figures. One of them, garbed in peculiar garments, stared about in puzzlement; the other in stark fear. A young, tear-stained face glanced at his chronometer. One sickening thought burned in his brain—F Hour.

"Damn, why wasn't I paying attention to the time. C'mon, we gotta hurry!". Seth screamed.

"What's going on?" Rick shouted, perplexed.

"F Hour. You know, Fog Hour. When the decontamination gas is released, the decongas helps keep the radiation level from getting too high. The stuff is poison to us when it's first released. If we don't get in, we'll suffocate."

Seth darted frantically in the direction of his house, thinking that Rick was following. But a glance behind him some seconds later proved Seth's assumption to be incorrect. He was gone, as if he had never been. Forget him. I'm a dead man if I don't get in, Seth thought.

Screech. The wail of the siren resounded.

I have two minutes. Just a bit further and One minute Seth had I'm home free ... been racing savagely; now he lay sprawled on the ground. The fall had twisted Seth's ankle. Searing pain shot up his leg as Seth stood up on it. A third blaring siren. There was now only a minute. Limping, Seth neared his home. Forty seconds. He quickened his limp; the pain increased. Thirty seconds. His limp transmuted into an unsteady gallop. Ten seconds. Thirty more yards. Five seconds. His house grew closer. But there was a stone small, but nevertheless it served its sinister purpose. Seth tripped again. A shrill shriek sounded once more and a thick gray ominous cloud or "fog" rolled with agonizing slowness down the street. The gas expanded further out on its course to encompass the town, dwarfing all buildings in the process. Seth glared as the dark vapor drew closer and sighed as it drifted harmlessly past his window. In the last seconds before the decon-gas had reached his house, Seth had scurried inside. Now he stood placidly by the window chuckling a hollow laugh; then he limped to his room.

Seth began his home lessons with American History. The history cassette in the recorder, he viewed the assigned chapter. It began:

> Chapter 14 Inventions of the Late Twentieth Century

Near the close of the 1900's, many mechanical inventions were developed by individuals and private enterprises. Probably the most singular of these particular inventions was the claim, in 1994, by a private research center of the development of a time-travel device, which supposedly enabled a man to be sent into the future up to one hundred years. Its alleged inventor maintained that he had traveled ahead to the year 2057. The scientist insisted that he had learned from a boy that a nuclear war would engulf the United States in radiation and eventually destroy all life. This scientist, Richard D. Oxtonn of Galvin Scientific Research Center, was committed to an asylum, his delirious rantings blamed on his previous residence at the radiation-infested Love Canal. Whether Professor Oxtonn ever did invent a time machine is still unknown.

Seth gazed open-mouthed at the viewer for a long time. . . .

Strange Foreshadows

When Violence subsides And the guns are no more,

When Hunger is unknown In the homes of the poor,

When Hatred no longer Knocks the Heart's door,

Then surely Judgement Day has come With its Blessing of Wonders Galore.

— Ting S. Tse

Lonesome Wind

Alone. Alone. Alone.
I cannot fight it.
The beauty I see I cannot share.
Alone.

I am alone.

Wind wails and whistles above me. It knows.

It travels over the black night. It moves the waves against the rocks and with the bending grasses blows.

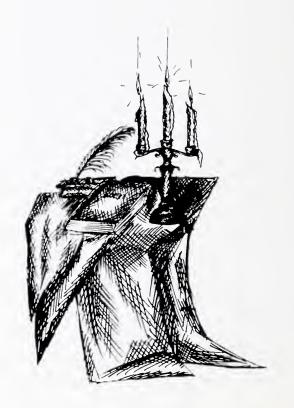
It sees what I see and feels what I feel Alone.

At night I am alone.
I am the wind. I walk on the grasses.
I touch the essence of the earth.
My fleeting thoughts fly just as fast
-1 am timeless.

I touch the flowers; I bend myself over the people.

Alone. Alone. Alone. Alone.

-Beth Nicholson



Windswept Ideas

Let my mind direct me
To where it yearns to fly.
To fly like a colt's mane.
Thrashing in the air whilst
Bolting legs rebel with leaps.
Giant bounds on the fields
green, speckled with the
dinness of wildflowers—there,
There my mind yearns to be free.

Let my mind take me
To glide o'er the dark ripples of the sea,
Sailing on the river.
The river flowing briskly against
the slow twilight of the city
To meet the ocean's current.
Duty calls on me, and I must hasten.

-Wendy F. Toy

Untitled

Need is an addition. Anger is constructive. Hatred is to be despised. Love, also, is addictive.

— Phineas Chan

Sweet Breeze

Blow the breeze from the lips,
From the trees to the little boats.
The wind peeks from behind the bushes,
and whips its branches to and fro.
Blow my hair to the side
Let my feet dangle and soak.
Waves surge under the plastered
and painted framework of a boat.
Let my mind be not fixed, and
Become a log a drift.

— Wendy F. Toy

Determination with No Direction

My determination is strong and continuous, But there is one problem: It has no direction. It has produced no results. Determination for me is merely a rambler.

Determination with No Destination: It is a lost cause, aimless, Never taking stock. Nothing will ever be.

Determination with No Outcome—
It is labor lost:
A waste of precious time,
With no effect.

Life without effort, Love, hopes, No results is Determination not at all.

-Wendy F. Toy

Bedsheets

White sales by the dozen From Sear's percale linens To Bloomingdale's silk sheets.

Patterns in geometric design
The swanly, spicey, serene flavor of the Orient.
Here comes the cunning, country collection
Then there is the solid color for your normal days.

Not important you say,
Bedsheets are bedsheets!
Ah, but there you are wrong.
Some like 'em warm and snuggy.
Some like 'em cold and untouched.

They can be washed-and-dried, permanent-press, or if you please, use steam

One thing's for sure, bedsheets are a place for sweet dreams.

-Wendy F. Toy

Molding of Clay

by David MacNeil

The mist crept into the valley, battling darkness for possession of the sky. Beneath the mighty mountain, a number of scattered campfires could be seen, each one encircled by shadowy figures of enormous size, who were performing obviously elaborate dances with bouncing, half-controlled steps, as if they were dancing in a stupor. A number of other of these figures lay on the hard, cold ground, either asleep or groaning incomprehensibly, surrounded by deflated wineskins. Heaps of armor littered the ground, while every figure was girded with a long, flat sword, whose sheath hung upon a thick, leather belt at the waist. Ancient songs escaped from their lips, beat against the sides of the hills, rolled through the bushes of heather and thistle, and disappeared into the mist.

Throughout the valley crackling fires lit up the black, inky sky. One patch of land, however, had been left untouched by men, arms, and fires, and a large tent had been set up upon it. The moon, still not completely covered by the mist, was high in the night sky as a solitary figure made its way from one of the dancing groups to this tent and entered into it.

"Gruoch, I knew I would find you in here. I saw the light shining outside your tent and reckoned that you must be inside and not taking part in the revels again. Why do you brood so much lately, Gruoch? You are a high priest, yes, but even we are allowed to partake of pleasure when the occasion arises." Then, as an afterthought, he shot out, "And this is a festive day, as well, so you may take your pleasure with the blessings of the gods."

His words had no apparent effect on the high priest, who continued to stare at a small bit of metal he held in his hands. Ignoring his companion's exhortations he said, in a barely audible voice and without answering the other at all, "They have come back, Glenelg. They have come back."

Still slighty tipsy from the wine, Glenelg

asked, "Who? Who have come back?"

In response Gruoch slowly handed him the small metal object he had been staring at for so long. It consisted of two sticks of gold, one longer than the other, which were attached to each other crossways. On the top was placed the figure of a man with arms outstretched and legs fastened together. It was a crucifix.

At first Glenelg hesitated to take the object, but all of a sudden he violently snatched it out of his friend's hands, as if he were disarming a brigand or enemy soldier.

"This time we shall be merciless with them," he roared. "We shall take all our warriors and descend upon them and slaughter them all. We shall..."

"And we shall do what?" asked Gruoch, whose face was furrowed with many wrinkles, not all from old age. "We threatened them, and they did not leave. We killed their leaders, and more came to replace them. Then we killed those of our people who had joined them"—he paused a moment and glanced in the direction of the shouting—"and they wind up with more followers than they had before. There is no stopping them, I tell you. There is something that allows them to snatch a victory from each defeat. I cannot understand it." He bowed his head and drifted off into thought.

Glenelg grew enraged at his companion. "Why do you whimper like a cowardly Saxon dog, Gruoch? You speak as if these men really were filled with the power of the gods, as they so vilely claim. Whatever they say they are, they are really only men, nothing more, and so can be killed easily enough. They are stubborn, yes, but do not even strike back and so prove themselves stupid, ignorant fools. You are the sworn priest of the gods of the ancients—remember that. It is your duty to lead your people"—he pointed outside the tent—"against these invaders. Do it, I say!" He flung the crucifix to the ground, and it made a slight impression in the dirt.

"It will not work," said Gruoch, as he slowly bent to pick the crucifix up. He clasped it tightly in his hand.

"Why, in the name of the gods, not?" Glenelg fired back hotly. They fight us with empty words, and we are to cower before them in fear? You, Gruoch, are a bigger fool than I had thought. It is not enough that you spend hour after hour studying your texts, some of which are very strange to be read by a priest of the gods. No, you must go further and act like a coward at the very time your people need you the most. So be it, then. I say, one more time, lead your people against these invaders; if you won't, I will do it myself and leave you to be dealt with later. What do you say, Gruoch?"

For the first time during the entire conversation Gruoch appeared alarmed at his friend's words. He bolted to his feet, faced Glenelg squarely, and, thrusting the crucifix in front of his yes, blurted out, "Where do you think I found this, Glenelg? Where? Among the belongings of one of our soldiers, that's where! If there is one, there are bound to be more. Soon we will have no army left to fight with, anyway. Then we will truly be powerless before them."

Glenelg suddenly found himself on the defensive. "And that is precisely why we must hurry to attack them while we still can, Gruoch. Besides, see how many warriors still come to the rites. That proves how much faith they still have in the gods."

Drained, Gruoch sank back into his seat. His voice was tired and sad. "They come for the revels," he said, "not for the rites. Every day their invocations grow more and more hollow; some have stopped saying them altogether. Soon no one will be left.... They will all be seduced away from the ways of their fathers. There is nothing we can do but pray to the gods that our people will be delivered...." His words trailed off, and he stared at the crucifix with a look of neither hatred nor despair, but rather with a somewhat sad contemplation. He felt his eyes grow a little bit moist, but he quickly wiped them with his cloak.

Glenelg glared at the high priest with burning, round eyes. How he despised him for his inaction! He saw his own duty clearly and stormed from the tent to prepare the soldiers for battle.

Still inside the tent, Gruoch reached down and pulled a big book from underneath a pile of sheepskins upon the ground, he opened it and read for a long time; he often looked up and stared into space. Always he would renew his reading with new intensity. He called this the "preach-book," since it was the one used by many of those newcomers when they spoke to the people.

After a long while he shut the volume and thought. He thought about the faith of his people, their belief in the gods, their ritual sacrifices, their bloody battles with their neighbors. Then he looked again at the metal object in his hands and began to cry.

His crying was not a whine, like that of a child who has lost a favorite toy, nor was it a bitter cry, as that of a warrior whose companion has been killed. Rather, it was more like the deep, quiet sobbing of a child scolded by his parents for something he knows he has done wrong. As he wept he saw blurred images dancing in his mind: blood, hate, the ancestral gods. And soon another vision came into view as well: the crucifix, with its figure of a man tied on it. Words kept flashing before him, such as sin, pagans, Christ, love, mercy. Strange words, which he had read but did not understand very well at all. But he understood enough.

And then, overcome by a feeling that was surging inside him, the high priest of the ancestral gods fell down on his knees and prayed to his Maker for the first time in his life.

"Observation"

I sat down to write a poem of love, Instead I wrote some desperate stuff. My lines were full of remorse and hate. I guess that love was not my fate.

-Phineas Chan

Untitled

I am an Aeneas who will search for a home When my adolescence crumbles beneath me I am the vagabond who slowly sips his wine when the street seems so very lonely.

What will I find?
Will I ever know?
How the path does wind
to the place I go

I am the student who will never ask the questions Always afraid of hearing what is true I am the teacher who can never give the answers; the questions run too deep for both me and you.

But we have found we still do not know How the path has wound we still must follow.

I am the parent who watches a child grow And wonders if they've done right or wrong I am the child who looks out on the road And wonders why everyone must travel on.

But the time is coming When I will have to leave The curtain is quickly drawing On my final childhood scenes.

Eve Goodman

The Magician

The magic stops when the curtain drops; The doves and rabbits are put away. The wand is placed in the magic case And saved for another day. The show is over, but the image hovers, Of the audience gone away.

The air is still, yet the applause yet lingers: The laughter, the smiles...the buttery fingers Of the people gone away.

Ever and ever, I will remember
The magic show that late December:
The cunning coaxes, the intriguing hoaxes
Of my magician, now far away...

— Ting S. Tse

Repetition

A ball of chemicals under the sun, A phosphate, a nucleotide: Life has begun.

A bit of uranium,
A neutron gun,
A ball of chemicals under the sun.

by George Maalouf



Quick Relief for the Discouraged Masses

Ahright, you're feelin' lousy...

You're just feelin' melancholy;
No sunshine's gonna break your gray.
Can't put your finger on the problem,
So no relief's gonna come your way.
You wanna know: "Where's the silver linin'?"
Sometimes, dear, it's too hard to say...

Just take to the air and scream your head off, make yer blues up and run away!

(You might wanna warn the neighbors...)

-R.D.D.

What Life Was Like in Late 1912

by Sandra Jean-Louis

I am interviewing my grandfather Boucard who was born in the year 1912. He was born at "Jacmel," one of the small villages of Haiti in the West Indies.

School was not very popular, so his father did not bother sending him until he was about eight years old. While there he had problems getting adjusted to the code of discipline, since he had worked on the farm with his father at a tender age. He stayed in school until he was eighteen and then he discussed the idea of leaving the farm in order to make a living. His parents did not agree with him and this created a lot of friction because he felt he was old enough to make his own decisions. Yet he worked on the farm until his father died. But now it became even more difficult for him to leave, since he was the oldest son and he had two brothers and a sister as well as his mother to take care of. He developed a strong hatred for the country life, because he felt that there was no future in it for him. So when a big hurricane devastated all the crops on which he had worked so hard, he made up his mind. When the weather subsided, he sold whatever was left and took whatever he could with his family. This marked the beginning of a new life.

Life in the city was not as easy as he had thought it would be. He found out very quickly that he needed more than money; he needed skills. In those days women did not need that much education. So he sent his mother and his sister to work, while he enrolled in a school. There he learned how to be a shoemaker. Things were getting better and better in the family. He used his skills not only to make shoes, but also to make hats, belts, and saddles. He was very respected by his family and his friends, because he proved to them that he could make it, and promised

them that he would do even better than that. As the years went by, he became more mature and self-confident and determined to fight. He fought against the epidemic that killed thousands of people and left thousands of others handicapped. Within two weeks from each other his mother and his brother both died from the disease, but he was left unharmed. There was talk of war, so he took advantage of the situation and enlisted in the army. He served for four years and there got the opportunity to get some skills in business administration.

In the meantime, his sister had gotten married and had given a christening party for her first born. At that party he had met the woman that would become my grandmother.

That girl had a zest for life and a desire to have money. Her ambitious nature along with his determination to win made the most suitable union. She was "Molasse" and he was "Ant", as they still call each other. She kept on pushing him; she gave him ideas, he interpreted and applied them. And boy did they work! They did not care about going out, they did not care about receiving people, they went to no movies, did not visit the theater, took no vacations, as all of these would have cost them money, which they did not want to spend, because they wanted a better life for their future children. By the time my mother was born, my grandfather was one of the biggest "Mahogany" businessmen in town.

My grandfather's life story is very tough, and from his experiences he learned never to give up. In life someone has to set up a goal and work hard toward it; there will be difficulties, but once you're determined and motivated, you will always win.

The Problem With Susan

Now, this fact ain't new, but you can see it's true. The problem with Sue is she's nothing like you ...

THE LAST TRENCH

by Van Owens

A soldier runs with his head low through a raging battlefield. His feet slosh quickly through the mud, but this noise is silent compared to the roaring clatter of the artillery shells that burst all around him. The rattling machine guns, the powerful mortars whistling overhead then exploding into the earth. Manmade thunder. His mind is like that of a frightened rabbit, seeking a place to hide from a hungry fox, a place to hide from Death. Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he sees a deep trench. A moment flashes by and he is there, lying face down in the mud, his arms flung about his head. There he feels safe. Safe from the lurking Death that crawls throughout the battlefield, striking the unwary and the unlucky. There he remains, oblivious to the death-bringing explosions that blast all around him.

God, that noise is terrible. I can't take it anymore. The noise is more deadly to me than the weapons themselves. But I can't hear it anymore, I must have gone deaf. God, I'm scared.

I'm tired, hungry. My stomach aches and my head feels like it's cracking. I'm safe though, for a while at least. What do they call it, the Grim Reaper? Man, he's really been cutting them down today. So many men dead. He won't find me here though, not in this beautiful deep hole. Wonder how come I'm the only one here.

Why do we have to fight like this? What is all this for? I know that we are supposed to be fighting for the honor of our country, but we're all the same out here. All we do is crawl around through this mud, kill each other, and die. There are no countries out here, no nationalities. We'll all die because of this war, all of us. Some will really die, but many others will be dead in mind and soul, not in body. We'll all be dead though, no matter how it ends. I haven't even lived yet; I mean really lived. Now I'm as good as dead.

I have to calm down, have to pull myself together. Of course I'm not going to die, of course not. I'll just stay here in this nice quiet hole and let the battle wear itself out. Then we'll leave the front and we won't see it again, for a while at least. The fighting will end soon, I'm sure of it.

What do I do till then? Stay here and be still, what else? No, I have to occupy my mind or else I'll crack up. When I used to have nightmares Ma used to tell me to think good thoughts and they would go away; that's what I have to do. God, look at me. Here I am lying in the mud crying for momma like a baby. I gotta pull myself together; men don't cry. Good thoughts, good times in the past; I know there must have been some before the army. Before the war.

I remember something now. Chester! Yeah, Chas and me were best friends, real tight, like brothers. We had a lot of good times together. Damn, it's been such a long time, a whole year, I think. Wonder where he is now. Wonder if he's trapped in this war like I am. I'm sure we'll get together again after this war. It'll be just like it used to be when this damned war is over.

At that moment, the soldier raises his dirty, tear-streaked face. he sees another man splash down violently in the mud beside him.

Finally, someone to talk to. "Some battle, huh buddy. We sure are lucky to be in this nice deep hole. What's the matter man? A little shell-shocked? Me too. Hey, man, it's not that bad."

He pats the other man on the shoulder to reassure him. Reassurance is too late. The other man's head rolls on one side. Half of his face is a bloody pulp. A direct hit.

He's been hit! Oh my God, he's dead, he's dead... What's the matter with me? I've seen men killed before, and much worse than this. I've seen men lose arms and legs, bodies blown

to pieces. So many lives lost, and all for ... for what? Nothing. Never so close though. I was right here, right beside him when he got it. God it could have been me or ... or Chas or ... my God!

The enemy.

It's the damned enemy's fault that this man is dead, that I will die. Not if I can help it. They won't get me. I'll kill them first. Isn't that the name of this game, we kill them before they kill us? This pit isn't as deep as I thought it was; it's not that safe. It smells like blood down here, like . . . like death.

Suddenly, the explosive noises return to the ears of the soldier. He pulls himself frantically from the hole. The bayonet of his rifle flickers as it reflects the light from a nearby explosion.

He charges raging, firing his weapon.

"You won't get me, damn it!" Furious explosions.

"You won't kill this man, not this one!" Blinding explosions.

"I'll destroy you! I'll send you all to Hell!"

Brain-wrenching explosions, blasting all around him. He dodges them deftly. But then, a single bullet is hurled forth from a single rifle. The soldier falls, fatally hit. His polished green helmet flickers with the reflection of another explosion. His lifeless hands are mudsplattered, still clutching the rifle. It's all over, for this one.

Another soldier runs with his head low through a raging battlefield. . . .

THE CASTING OUT ONE ACT PLAY

by Karen E. Wier

CHARACTERS

CLARA LONG
BILL SAMSON
THEODORE JOHNSON
MISSIONARY
CONGREGATION

The Scene: The congregation is assembled in the sanctuary of the All Saints Baptist Church. The meeting has been called to discuss church business. Chairman Bill Samson is presiding.

Bill Samson: Officers, members, and friends of the All Saints Baptist Church, we're here on this solemn occasion to decide whether to keep or to replace our pastor of twenty-five years. As you know, Rev. Albert Moore has served this church above and beyond the call of duty during his long pastorate. Through snow, sleet, rain, and hail, our Reverend has tried to uphold the sanctity of this church. He has been a dedicated pastor, an anchor in the storm of life.

But, friends, Rev. Moore can only do so much. Our pastor is getting on in years. My grandmother Samson used to say that his time is drawing to a close. She also used to say that the weary shall take their rest. I think that Rev. Moore is weary. I think our pastor needs a rest.

Theo. Johnson: Yes, sir! Let there be rest for the weary. Amen!

Samson: If we got another minister, he would have that needed relaxation. No, friends, not someone who could take the place of our pastor. No man is big enough to fill the shoes of Rev. Moore, but we can have a man who is as dedicated to the service as our Reverend. We need a man who will provide us

with spiritual inspiration during our pastor's absence.

This meeting has been called to see if you—officers, members, and friends—will give Rev. Moore the peace he is worthy of. As a church family we must not deprive our pastor of relaxation. Yes, friends, do not let one obstacle stand in the way of his retirement.

You know Rev. Moore is truly a great man. He has served faithfully for twenty-five years, and he hasn't *hinted* at when he would like to retire. Never! Why, it takes a great man not to ask for retirement! I think that Rev. Moore has too much pride to ask for a rest. Therefore, let us offer this splendid "gift" to him freely.

Johnson: Everyone needs a rest—even the church family.

Congregation: Especially the church family! Samson: Yes, friends in Christ, think about how your pastor is in desperate need of retirement, and then think how selfish you would be to deprive him of it. Think about all these things before you cast your ballots.

Clara Long: Mr. Chairman, there is no point that you have not touched upon, and touched upon in great detail. There was only one thing missing—regret. Samson, you would feel no pain, no compassion at his leaving, but I would. I believe that Rev. Moore has served this church because it has been a joy for him to preach the Word to sinners and hypocrites alike. I'm sure you can testify to that, Mr. Chairman.

Members, when you cast your ballot against our pastor, you are throwing away a life. Mr. Samson says that our Reverend never asked for a "rest." Why not? He never asked for one because he never wanted one. I'm sure that possibility never crossed your mind, Samson.

Friends, Rev. Moore has seen this church through many trials and tribulations. Lord knows, he'd see you through more if you'd let him! How can you cast out a man who has served you so many years?

Samson, when you claim that you want to give the pastor a rest, you are lying, and nothing else.

The Bible holds no significance for you. God knows why you even come to church.

Missionary: Sister Clara, everyone knows

that without Brother Samson the Devil would have stayed in Mississippi. The entire congregation ought to thank him for bringing the Devil back to the fold.

Johnson: Well, get thee behind us, Satan Samson.

Clara: Friends, think of how much love Rev. Moore has given to each and every one of you. Show that you can return that love. Don't cast him by the wayside.

Johnson: My question is: Can we afford to cast him by the wayside? Brother Samson, don't you think that it might be too expensive to give the pastor a rest? We would have to start a retirement fund, which would mean dipping into the weekly tithes and offerings. And if we did that, we would be slicing off the building fund. Mr. Chairman, I think it's cheaper to keep him.

Clara: Mr. Johnson, our Chairman is, as you know, the treasurer for the building fund and chairman of the trustee board. I'm sure if he gave us a financial statement right now, we would have enough to swing it. However, it has come to my attention that Samson takes in so much money that he uses part of it to play the numbers game—all in the interest of the church, of course.

Missionary: Are you saying that Samson plays the numbers with my hard-earned money?

Congregation: The numbers game is a sin. Samson: Now, friends, I was only thinking about the church. If we use the Lord's gifts—the numbers game—we can increase our offering manyfold.

Clara: Is increasing so essential that we have to use the devil's device?

Johnson: Only a devil would play the numbers game, and only a fool would lose. Well, Samson, which are you?

Missionary: Exactly by how much did you increase the church's profits, Samson?

Samson: I didn't exactly increase—

Missionary: Then, what do you call it?

Johnson: I'd call it a decrease.

Missionary: Samson, you took our money and squandered it on a game for heathens.

Clara: Let's be thankful if we can beg Pastor Moore to stay without a salary. I think we ought to count our blessings, if we can't count our money. Missionary: Amen, Sister!

Johnson: Yes, Rev. Moore would be helping us over a spiritual and financial crisis if he stayed.

Clara: I can't imagine how you expected to pay a new minister without any money.

Samson: I guess that just slipped my mind. Clara: Well, if things keep slipping your mind, that is the first sign.

Johnson: It is a clear case of advanced senility.

Samson: Senility! I ain't got no senility!

Clara: Brethren, our Chairman is getting on in years. He's served our church family well until recently, when things began to slip his mind.

Johnson: Let there be rest for the weary and the senile.

Samson: If I could only say a word or two in my behalf

Clara: You see before you a man that is too proud to ask for a "rest." Clearly, he shows the same virtue as our pastor. Let's offer Samson unlimited relaxation. All in favor say "Aye." I don't think we'll need secret ballots for this one.

Johnson: Amen, Sister Clara!

Missionary: Since Brother Samson has just received enough votes to retire, I think we should delay getting a new pastor until we can get a new Chairman.

Clara: I think we should dedicate a hymn to Mr. Samson.

Johnson: 1 know just the one:

There's rest for the weary, There's rest for the weary, On the other side of Jordan, In the sweet fields of Eden Where the tree of life ablooming.

There's rest for the weary, There's rest for you.

The play ends as a downcast Samson leaves through the back door while the congregation repeats the refrain.

AMBITION

Pity man, who might, Yet does not see the day But toils straight-away Into blinding sunlight.

See, it shines and draws man near.
Beware that ray:
No warmth, I say
In looking upward there.

The mountain peak is rough and cold, The edges jagged through. Those who reach it are but few, And they are bold.

Better to bathe in the light, Taking time to understand The wonders of the land, Than to climb that lonely height.

- Hazel Wong

Drumming Exercise

SHA-BAPITY-BA-BOP/ BA-LAMITY-BAM-BAM/ (th-th-thump th-thump) SABATITA-S-SLAM!!!

Drumming Exercise (Part II)

Take down the cymbals, pack up the kit, show just ended, s'bout time that I quit. Well, it's late night, the kit's home, I'm dying for sleep,

and I hit the bed snoring a slow, steady beat.

— John Cusack

Franklin McDermott's Nocturnal Ride

Franklin went riding, with an axe through East Kelsid,

on a rainy night sometime in Fall.

"It's my birthday!" he said, and he left them all dead.

(Though he stacked them outside the town hall...)

He was caught the next day, (Around noon, people say...)

when in Oak Bluff, he bragged of his feat. (As to why he had stacked what he'd viciously hacked,

he remarked that he'd always been neat.)

The judge was quite eager in deliv'ring a sentence:

'You will hang by the neck 'til your death!"

The prisoner's last was a phrase he laughed off:

"Light a light, I'll be back..."

End of breath.

And many's the year that comes to pass...

lt's the Twelfth of October, stores closed for the night.

With dusk comes a cloudburst and rain...

So make sure tonight you don't answer that knocking;

Franklin is riding again.

—John Cusack



Morning Song

Another night, another end.
I will never have this day again.
It crept away, it could not stay,
but brought some stars to be my friends.
And now the stars all glance at me,
and smile a little sorrowfully.
And oh, I know, regretfully so,
of what they speak so silently.

For at the eve of yesterday,
I saw the sunset fade away.
And I felt sad, for all I had
was with the sun going away.
An end had come, and how I cried
when I beheld all that which died.
In haste had I said no goodbye,
for I had not noticed the ebbing tide.

But then morning sang a song to me and tried to soothe the misery, and I heard not the song it brought; its tenderness was lost on me.
But as a child (and I was such) both wants and hates a mother's touch, I longed to sing with the morning, but was suffering too much.

Ah, but came the sunset of today, an entire day had passed away.

And so I learned how minutes turn; my end became another day.

Yes, I was taught by my wise new friends that beginnings always come of ends.

To hear the songs of a healing dawn, is to begin again.

And now the stars will flicker while I sleep, forever sparkle and with me weep.

And in my dreams it will always seem that pretty morning o'er them creeps.

And now the stars all glance at me, and they smile down so happily.

And now I know, oh, how I know, why we laugh so joyfully.

-Beth Nicholson

New Year's Day

by Paul Laurino

What a way to spend New Year's, thought Yavin. Here it is, the first day of 2348, and I'm stuck in this stuffy T station wearing this damn suit.

Yavin M'kin tried to kid about his situation with himself to ease the tension, but he only found false relief. He knew very well that he, his friend Robyn Llowen, his young stepbrother Toby, or anyone else in Tubeway Station 104 wearing a tight khaki might very well be going to his death.

Nervously Yavin pulled at his suit as the tube car neared the station. The car's engines boomed and the tracks beneath it let loose a high-pitched squeal. Sounds almost like someone shrieking, Yavin thought to himself. But he did not laugh...

Strange, thought Yavin after he and the other men—none of them over thirty—had entered the tube car and seated themselves. It's funny the way some things can change people, he mused, looking in Robyn's direction. Usually Robyn is so talkative, but now he's so silent—just sits and broods. The same with Toby, he thought, looking at his stepbrother. Yavin recalled how, when his own mother had died, his father had remarried. He had married a divorcee—Toby's mother. Toby and Yavin had never been very close; in fact, it seemed that Toby even resented Yavin. Now Toby was simply gazing into space.

Yavin turned and looked out the tube car's window at the buildings flashing by and at the early morning sky, in which the stars were still barely visible, glaring at him like a million eyes.

"It's hard to believe that They can see us and even though They are far away could destroy us with just the touch of a button," Yavin whispered to Robyn on his left. Both boys shuddered a little.

An escort met the twenty khaki-clad males at the last stop, and he led them along a wide street toward a majestic oval-shaped building with large, silver letters across the front reading Terran Interstellar Relations Building.

The building's magnificent arches, spiraling pillars, and bright, glowing lights reminded Yavin of how well Earth had reconstructed itself after the Dark Wars. It was hard for him to believe that all this technology, all this beautiful architecture, might all go to waste because of Them.

Yavin recalled when he had first heard of Them. He had been watching the holoviewer when the announcer reported a news flash. "Alien beings have threatened to destroy all life on Earth, claiming that their planet is deteriorating because of radiation. The aliens are reported as saying that they need another planet to live on and that Earth is the most suitable to their race. They claim that in order for them to colonize Earth, all life on Earth must be exterminated. The beings have proven their power in an assault and total annihilation of Phobos, a moon of Mars," the announcer had said. And, for some reason, these aliens became known as "Them."

Now the group of men, ranging in age from eighteen to thirty, were in the building, and Yavin, with the others, was ushered into a large auditorium and seated in a plastiform seat. There were about eight hundred of them altogether. Yavin saw a freeze tube at the front of the auditorium, and it brought back a horrifying memory. Yavin remembered seeing on the news what took place in this auditorium just a few days before. A young girl was locked inside a clear glass cylinder, six feet in height—the freeze tube. After the glass tube had been sealed, its operator flicked a small, green switch on a nearby console, and a frosty-white mist filled the tube, freezing the young girl in less than a second. Her frozen corpse, still imprisoned in the translucent, cylindrical coffin, was later placed aboard a ship, along with an assortment of dead animals that had met their fate in the same manner. Soon one of the males in the auditorium would be in the tube up front. ...

Not long after everyone had been seated, a short, pudgy man entered the room and spoke over the microphone in a scratchy voice.

"Before we proceed, I shall first summarize why you are all here. As you must already be aware, They have agreed to disregard Earth and search for a new planet only if we can prove to Them that homo sapiens and animal life on Earth are worth preserving. However, due to the fact that They are a considerable distance from Sol system, we are forced to send specimens of Earth life, along with records and data, to Them, instead of Their coming here and studying us. You have been chosen to come here because you are the best mentally and physically fit male humans on Earth. One of you will be sent with other specimens to Them so that They may study you. Unfortunately, to keep his body well preserved on the long trip, the person chosen must be frozen dead in the tube behind me. The khaki serves as a further preservation device by keeping the skin from flaking.

"Each of you will receive a Mohonay tablet with a red button on top. After the computer to my right has selected a four-digit number at random, press the button on the tablet and open it. If the number inside your Moho tablet matches the number picked by the computer, you shall be the specimen. I regret that we must stoop to such barbarism, but we are at Their mercy and have no choice." His voice was filled with compassion for the young men before him.

Yavin took his tablet. Toby was on his left, but Robyn had been seated farther back. Yavin awkwardly patted Toby as a friendly gesture, but Toby did not seem to feel it.

The computer whirred, and the number 7844 popped up on the screen. Cradling the Moho in the palm of his left hand, Yavin drew the fingers of his hand near the red button and pressed. It seemed like eons before the Moho tablet opened. His eyes were glued on the numbers displayed on the Moho, and he sighed with relief when he realized what they were. "One-seven-two-six—nowhere close," Yavin said.

He looked around for Robyn. When he saw him, Robyn answered Yavin's quizzical glance with a smile. He won't be needing his khaki, either, Yavin thought.

Then Yavin turned to Toby. Toby had not opened his tablet yet, nor did he seem to be planning to do so. With a pitiful and scared expression, he turned to Yavin. "Would you please open it for me, Yavin? Please?" he asked.

Yavin sat stunned. This was the first time Toby had ever looked to Yavin for help. "Sure, Toby," Yavin answered, pleased. "Let me have your Moho."

Yavin placed his open tablet on the armrest separating his and Toby's seats. Then, taking Toby's Moho, he turned face forward in his seat and stared at the unopened Moho tablet in his hand. Focusing all his attention on this Moho, he pressed the button. The tablet's hatch popped open, but this time Yavin didn't smile. He checked over the numbers on the Moho again, then slowly turned his face toward Toby, who immediately straightened up in his seat.

"Toby... I'm sorry, but your number... it is..." Yavin broke off. To Yavin's astonishment, Toby, even though he must have realized the number on his Moho matched that on the computer, did not look the least bit shaken.

"Don't you understand, Toby? Your number—it's 7844."

Toby took an open Moho from his lap and held it in front of him. "No, it isn't, it's 1726," Toby stated innocently. Yavin stared down at the armrest: his Moho was not there. He glared up at Toby.

Meanwhile, two sentries saw Yavin holding the tablet reading 7844. The guards came down the aisle toward him. Yavin tried desperately to get his rightful tablet back, but Toby refused to let go of it. Grabbing Yavin by the shoulders the guards dragged him from his seat.

"No!" Yavin shouted, fear, anger, and helplessness all rising within him. "I didn't get this number! This Moho isn't mine! Toby, don't do this! Toby!"

But Toby did not listen; no one did. Yavin was hauled down the aisle toward the freeze tube. He struggled, but in vain: the guards'

grips were inescapable. Yavin was thrust into the tube, and it was sealed.

"I didn't get it," Yavin screamed. "You can't kill me, it isn't fair!" But no one could hear him. "This is how I'm spending New Year's! Ha, ha, ha. What a way to spend New Year's!" Yavin ceased his ranting; he was sobbing uncontrollably. He peered through the tube's glass wall. He saw Robyn crying. He saw a fat little man. He saw Toby staring blankly. Then a finger hit a small, green switch ... and he saw nothing at all.

Untitled

Each generation has its war— I wonder when ours will be. They say the time may not be far, A year or two or three.

Suppose (just suppose) we leave a few Behind. What pity would they have for us, Who cast upon their world a crimson hue? Their harshest judgment would be just.

They say this war will be the last— Perhaps this is the best, With no one left to know the past, To sneer and scorn and jest.

Ours, the greatest war, will never be forgiven, But it will come if we continue at this rate So we must not, by foolish pride, be driven—Let the custom of peace with us originate.

Don't spit and curse Because you've been done a bad turn; The turn will be no less worse And your blood will continue to burn.

Try to remember that life is a game— A game of luck more than most, For our fates are blind and take no aim— Whatever they had for eyes are lost.

You do not hold the arrow in your hand But, as the wind, you can direct it—
So before it's time for it to land
Take air and blow upon it!

— Wanda Gleason

Untitled

Time and time again you taunt me;
Night after night I am lonely;
Book by book romance comes and goes;
Moment beyond moment, and again,
dewlets fall.
Memories that never were fill my thoughts.
Empty, empty and hopeless dreams all!

- Phineas Chan

MY TIME HAS COME

Before,

answers were needed each time I laughed or cried;

Now nothing is needed.

No one asks me to explain myself, for they know the reason.

They are not blind.

They can see, as I have seen,
a special person walks into my life.

Now I do not need to explain.

The twinkle in my eyes tells all.

Look —
you see I am happy.

Look —
you see I am happy.
Look further —
now you see that I am in love.
For my heart is seen through my eyes.
And yes, I am truly in love.
My time has finally come.

— Susan Hanlon

My Hope ...

If I should die this moment,
where would I go?
Will I be in heaven with the angels all day?
Is that where I'll stay?
Or will I be with the bad and weep
till I wear away?
Where is my hope? Whom shall I trust?
That is what I must find, I must, I must.
Shall Jesus knock at my window?
Will he save me from hell?
I will open my window and let him in
Won't that be swell?

—Mary Caulfield

Uncertain

Look at the sky. It seems so unfamiliar, yet the same. What happened here? Or rather what happened to myself.

Seeking and searching my soul.
The beliefs, values, and dreams are still there
Why then?
Why am I so doubtful?
Uncertain?

That little star in the background— It so resembles me, Glittering, bright and sparkling. If you notice, though, the light flashes, Uncertain and hesitant.

That ladybug scurrying about — It stops moving, Pourquoi? She too is uncertain of direction.

All three of us seem to fall Into nature's reign Of unknown fate. As it is written: Destiny: Uncertain.

— Wendy F. Tov

ľm

I'm in a dark room, laughing, sitting, dancing. I'm in a dark room, trying to be, wondering who I am.

On a spring day I'm smiling, giggling, joking. On a spring day I'm running, not knowing who I really am.

I'm in the spotlight, acting, saying, doing. I'm on the stage fighting, trying to be the character that I am.

I'm with my good friend, loving, trying, feeling. I'm with my good friend being, being only what and who I am.

-Beth Nicholson

"I'll Write You a Poem of Love"

I'll write you a poem of love That will outlast Eternity. For the gods above shall give It their immortality.

For my beloved, love too Shall not be less. My love shall wrap you In finest dress.

A gown of joy; A bonnet of song; A poem to enjoy. These to you shall belong.

Come to me, my beloved one. Let not thy true feelings fall. Our love shall outshine even the sun. For it's true, Love conquers all!

—Phineas Chan

The Art of Buying a Mercedes-Benz

by J.C. Cornell

Albert Winston Selbey VIII was not a welltravelled man. This was certainly not through any lack of funds on his part, and most assuredly not through any timidity either, be it of flying, sailing, or driving (of either the night- or daytime gender), but rather because of his strong dislike of anyone—anyone at all-who could not boast of a British citizenship. Therefore, it was with an admirable degree of patience that he tolerated his interpreter, Guillermo Sánchez, without whom he would have been unable to survive in Mexico, and it was that his meager supply of this invaluable material had been quite exhausted when it came time to deal with Andrés Quinterón.

Andrés owned a small, unintentionally open-air shop in the cheaper section La Plaza de Los Reyes in which he offered, among other things, helados, sandwiches, newspapers, cigarettes, radios, T.V.'s; small plastic sombreros painted with the words "Tony's REAL Mexican pancakes" in various eye catching colors; string, knives, dog collars, watches, children's toys, an impressive selection of dulces, girlie magazines, American tape cassettes, fully registered license plates, bed spreads, mesh shopping bags, little yellow canaries, hubcaps, brown singing finches, chewing gum, cooking utensils, cold, fresh-cooked fish in spicy lemon sauce, rifles, handcuffs, and second-hand Harlequin Romances. And it was for this last that Albert W. Selbey VIII found himself with an unaccountable craving when, having seen "every bloody, bleeding pyramid" within a 14 mile radius of Malancá, and desiring a bit of an "intellectual bloody interlude, if you don't mind!", he and Guillermo entered Andrés' shop at three-forty six in the afternoon of July 17, 19—.

Of course, being as he was, he couldn't come right out and say so. Therefore, it was necessary to make a grand tour of the little shop, asking every now and then (for appearance's sake—"What the bloody hell do they use that for?" and upon receiving the

answer to which he would invariably comment, "Good God. These people are barbarians!" no matter how inappropriate such a comment might be.

Eventually, they came to a halt before a small wooden table upon which sat two rather grimy cardboard boxes and above which was tacked a sign proclaiming "¡Periodicos! ¡Revistas! ¡Cuentos Romanticos!" as an indication of approximate content of the boxes. Albert peered distastefully in, cautiously extended his right index finger, which, with the aid of an accompanying thumb, removed a paperbound copy of "Love Among the Sand Dunes", and with his face averted in disgust, held it out at arms length in Guillermo's general direction.

"See that?" he inquired accusingly. "That's why that Cervanteez bloke conquered you lot in the bloody Spanish Revolution! It's sickening really", he continued as he stalked suspiciously past Guillermo, glaring malevolently at a group of small screaming children surrounding a young woman who was desperately trying to appease them with massive quantities of red licorice, "It's no bleeding wonder they don't practice birth control, after reading that trash! It's bloody encouragement, that's what that is!" and he grunted in a downright way, nodding his head for emphasis and obviously in complete agreement with himself.

"Pero, Señor, you do not want to book, yes?"

"Well of course I want it, man! I'll bring it to that idiot Parkingsley what sent me here in the first place. Got to be bleeding mad to think a chap would want something with an electric blender when he hasn't even a bloody toilet!"

By this time Albert had propelled himself to an irritated stop before Andrés who, having had no other customers but the young woman and her brood, had up to this time witnessed the whole pompous interchange in silence. And Albert, being one of those people who believe any foreigner can understand English if it is spoken loud enough, gestured wildly at the book he placed on the counter between them, and shouted at the top of his voice: "What's the price?"

Andrés gazed at him quietly for a moment, then turned calmly to Guillermo, whom he recognized as a fellow sufferer, and inclining his head slightly at the livid Englishman, said, "¿Que?"

"El precio, mi amigo. Quiere saber el precio."

A saintly smile of comprehension broke across the shopkeeper's face and he turned again to Albert and replied, "Setenta y doscincuenta, Señor."—the translation of which, when offered hesitantly by Guillermo, Albert interrupted with "Yes, yes! But what is it in pounds and pence, man?"—and upon receiving the answer to this inquiry replied "Good God. The man must be insane!" He then pushed Guillermo to one side with the gesture of a patrician among plebians, leaned across the counter until the tip of his nose was within two and one half inches of that of the Mexican on the opposite side, and began thus in a patronizing tone.

"Now look here. I can easily get bloody three of these things for the same price you're bloody charging for one." Here Andrés' eyebrows rose imperceptibly. "You try pulling this lot with those American chaps, my man, not with an English lad what's got his wits about him! Now I'll give you an honest third—one third of what you're asking—and even that's being bloody generous, since Mehico's supposed to be a good jolly well lot cheaper than the British Isles. Now what do you say, eh? One third, eh?"

Andrés, thinking it was better to at least appear to listen to Guillermo's rapid translation, did so, then smiled brightly, nodded his head vigorously, pumped the Englishman's hand as if hoping for water, and replied,

"¡Sí, sí, Señor! Pero = no, Señor. Le ofrezco a Ud...bueno: Seisenta y nueve pesos, ¿O.K.?"

"Sixty-nine pesos?" Albert choked out the words, the hysterical color rising to his face in great sweeping waves as, not trusting his money to Guillermo's mathematical capabili-

ties, he proceeded to work out the conversion for himself.

"No, it most certainly is not 'all right'", he replied indignantly to the interpreter, who had somehow managed to maneuver himself behind the counter to stand beside Andrés, who had graciously offered him a chair, an imported Cuban cigar, and a newspaper for his troubles.

"That bloody does it. Alright my man! You asked for it, and you're bloody going to get it. You'll see how the Englishman watches out for number one." Here Albert folded his arms defiantly across his chest, tossed his head back and barked, "Forty. My final offer."

The smile was gone from Andrés' lips. His eyes gleamed viciously and he whispered spitefully, "Cincuenta y cinco. ¡Fín!"

There followed a rapid conversation between the two Mexicans, in which Guillermo apologized profusely to Andrés for feeling so obliged, but felt he simply had to make an effort to assist the gringo by translating, even if this might result in Andrés' losing a few pesos, but couldn't they both go out somewhere for a few beers this evening, as the gringo was holed up just a few kilometers from here? In reply to which Andrés expressed his complete understanding of his friend's position, and suggested a new place that had just opened on the corner of La Avenida de Los Muertos and—

"Now just a bloody minute, you two! You"—he pointed an accusing finger at Guillermo—"Stay bloody out of this! I can jolly well handle this myself." That Albert was by this time quite eager for a fight was instantly recognized by Guillermo, who shrugged once, reminded Andrés of the proposed drink by a significant inclination of his head, and retired.

"Alright now. Where were we?" The Mexican laughed harshly in contempt. "Now you wait a bloody moment you—Very good: You won't take forty, eh? Forty's not blood good enough for you, eh? Well then: thirty-five. What do you say to that then, eh?"

The Mexican didn't even blink. "Cincuenta y siete."

"Oh? Oh really? When then, you. And you'd better keep a civil tongue in your head when

talking to a *British* citizen! Fine then! You can jolly well have thirty for your trouble, and not a shilling more!"

"Cincuenta y nueve."

"Bloody hell. I'll get you down lower than that if I have to spend all bloody afternoon here, I will! Now then; this positively is my last offer: Twenty-five pesos."

The Mexican raised his eyes heavenward, wrung his hands, and in the voice of a true Christian martyr, said,

"¡Ay! ¡Dios mio! Sí, sí! Me entrego a Ud. completemente. Setenta y dos-cincuenta— ¿OK?"

An evil look of satisfaction spread across the Englishman's face. He extended his hand heartily toward Andrés in the same manner which the victorious winner of an embarrassingly easy tennis match might use towards his defeated opponent, yet contented relief was evident on the faces of both men as Albert called authoritatively for his interpreter.

"Billy: pay the man," Albert ordered grandly and swept out of the shop, past two wrinkled old men who gazed after him in appropriate awe, and into the rear seat of his rented auto.

The two Mexicans exchanged glances. Guillermo pulled out an ample wallet, stood waiting expectantly with eyebrows raised, and then paid out the sum of seventy two pesos, fifty centavos with only a minimal registration of shock. The two men exchanged sincere wishes for the continued health of each other and their respective families, and Andrés again expressed his expectation of seeing Guillermo later in the evening for that drink, to which the latter replied thoughtfully that yes, he most certainly would be there; Andrés had rather a lot to ... explain?

"Adiós, mi amigo," Andrés called after him as he left the shop.

"Adiós, Diábolo," Guillermo answered, throwing him a knowing, appreciative glance.

Andrés only grinned mischievously, and went over to replace the National Geographics over the girlie magazines, just in case.

* * * *

"You see, Billy, it was all very simple." Albert Winston Selbey VIII, cigarette in hand, leaned back contentedly in the rear end seat of the little car and began to expound with the greater part of his soul. "You've just got to come from a civilized society, that's all," he remarked earnestly. "It's all anyone bloody needs. Now this...this book here"he waved the paperback distastefully so that Guillermo could view it clearly in the rearview mirror—"d'you remember what I said 'bout the price of such stuff back in Britain? I said, "Why, I can bloody buy three of these piddlers for what you've gone and charged for a bleedin' one!" That's what I said! Well let me tell you somethin', Billy, 'cuz you're a good bloke really"-at this Guillermo glanced anxiously up into the mirror—"let me just say this: I couldn't get no bloody three for that price, not if I was in bloody Australia, and that's the pitiful truth of it, it is! Why if I was to buy one of these back home,—Oh I'd say at least 16 shillings!"



Guillermo did some rapid calculations in his head while waiting for a man with a pottery-laden burro to pass and came up with the approximate final sum of seventy two pesos, fifty centavos. A smile came slowly to his lips, the simple smile of a simple man possessed just for a moment with a true philosophic perception into the frailities of humankind, for which he has little if any use at all. He patted the unsmoked imported eigar in his left breast pocket, thought on the night's awaited revelry in the cafe with Andrés, and was momentarily thankful that he had not yet been paid. Andrés wouldn't mind picking up the tab. After all, a man as crafty as the Devil could always get it back.

And in the back seat of the car, from under an open and already dog-eared copy of "Love Among the Sand Dunes," Albert Winston Selbey VIII began to snore.

LEARNED QUOTES

Moderation in all things, A truth that verily rings As life is experienced to the core, To only find it such a bore.

A penny saved, a penny earned, Is oft' a lesson learned When spendthrifts look within their purse For moneys to disburse.

To err is human, to forgive divine,
A maxim most notable and fine,
For how else in the world
would we ever dare deign
To view the results of a political campaign?

- Hazel Wong

A Tribute: 'Ma Crème Du Froment'

For the love I feel, there are no words, so why do I try to write?

These feelings push, they gasp for air, they long to be brought to light.

I've struggled with pen to make myself clear, but this wordless lot's my fate, for my verses stumble, gasp, and fall earthbound by their weight.

I've fought so long, but written naught; I can't form an idea. I've thrown away a thousand scraps, but alas, it's no more clear.

You are my Morning Glory, you, you've nullified defeat, 'Tu es ma force partout le jour': My fresh-made 'Cream of Wheat'.

- John Cusack

Untitled

I know I think too much of her—
She's a woman, not a goddess.
She's been through it all and come out
So very, very strong, so very wise.

I know I think too much of her— Beautiful woman, eyes of fire. Her smile warms, her eyes cut me When she tells me I'm just a kid.

Oh, woman, I'll never make you, Make your fiery eyes see that I am not just a little girl, Oh no, not a kid anymore.

I know I think too much of you,
But, darling, I know the story.
Your sweet touch, it will not hurt me,
And I won't ask you for love.

—Anonymous

A Medley

by Duncan Coakley

SHOWDOWN

I swaggered out into the main street. I could feel the weight of my newly acquired badge. I had to prove myself worthy of it. I waded across the street into a plush saloon and a lull came over the patrons enjoying beer. I strolled over to the bar and ordered a whiskey. At this point the noise started up again. I leaned against the bar and took a sip. Suddenly, my eyes focused on a very elegantly dressed man who looked very familiar. It was John Haccet. I had seen his face on many wanted posters around town. I almost choked on my whiskey. Then I slammed down my glass. Everything was quiet. I pointed at John and motioned for him to leave. He shook his head and went back to talking. Following his example, so did the rest of the customers.

This made me furious. My face grew red. I drew my gun and blew the glass in his hand to smitherines. A deadly silence swept into the room. I ordered him to leave by the count of three. He laughed. I counted. My numbers echoed off the silent walls, and by three he hadn't moved. Then, the crowd rose and cleared all the tables and chairs from between us. John stood up, put out his cigar and faced me.

His eyes were like a wildcat's ready for the kill. John was all I could see. He would be my greatest test. His reputation was known throughout the West. John had killed Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday. But for some reason, I thought I could beat him. He yelled "Draw." An instant later thunder. He was sprawled out on the floor. I left.

I had won. This was the first battle, but I knew there would be many more Johnny Haccets in the future. For now, I had won respect and the battle. But the war wouldn't be over until law and order had come to the West.

THE MOTHERLAND

I took my Stuka up into the air. The sky was clear and the clouds were few. My squadron flew in formation towards enemy lines. We had our mission — Stop Uncle Sam. Our troops had been pushed back into the suburbs of Berlin. The German Empire had collapsed. The Luftwaffe was reduced to making night raids, dropping the few bombs we had left.

We swooped low along the ground, hoping to sight a train or a truck convoy carrying supplies. Minutes later, we noticed a large group of shadows below us. Diving lower, we could tell it was a convoy of men, equipment and supplies. Bombs away! A few trucks went up in flame and we were answered by a flak barrage. We continued flying. Most of us had no bombs but we could draw away some heat from the other guys. Finally, we came upon a small Allied airfield where we emptied our racks and went home.

Because of the ammo shortage and our losses, this is what it has been like for a long time. The Allies have cut off all our supplies. Food and ammo are very scarce. My squadron and I have started eating rabbits and mice from the fields near our barracks. The ammo is almost gone. Many painful rumors are heard by my squadron, of people getting killed in battle and in dogfights because they ran out of bullets. This isn't the way the glorious German Empire should die. Many soldiers are frightened. Others have given up and deserted. But I'll never cower from defending my mother, my homeland, until I die.

Our missions are starting to get longer and longer apart (because we are running out of bombs). The war is coming to an end. Today a message came from Berlin. My wife and child were killed in a bombing. I was not alone. Many relatives of my squadron are dead at the hand of the R.A.F. My world is slowly

crumbling apart and I can do nothing. There is not much for me to live for — Germany is dying.

2050

The electric solar module climbs up over the mounds of habitation domes from here to the horizon, putting a soft glow over all the land. At 6:00 my bunk starts shaking, softly, then harder. I mumble something about five more minutes but it ignores me, as programmed. A little while later, I punch the wardrobe code into the small computer beside me (d-r-e-s-s). The bunk starts tilting until it comes to an erect position, then pushes me forward into the clothing cylinder. Inside, I am clothed, reminded of today's schedule and washed up in seconds. When I come out the other side, I am in a transhabitational pod (like an electric wheelchair). I enter the vertical air tube (elevator that uses suction) and I am sucked downwards.

Down on the bottom level, I maneuver over to the produce distributor. As I get close, a tray slides out of the armrest and slinks its shadow across my legs. While easing up close to the distributor it automatically turns on and asks me what I want (verbal computer). I order pancakes and some eggs, as always; in a couple of seconds of boredom, both are put on my tray by a pair of mechanical hands.

After eating, 1 pop the tray out of the armrest and stick it in the rubbish incinerator together with the plate and utensils, which are all disposable. Then I go to the gravity room to lift weights where a different amount of g's—gravity measurements—are put on a wooden dumbbell. I set the weight to 50 pounds and put on my anti-gravity suit (which covers my body like saran wrap) and lift. When I'm done I jump into the pod and peel out towards the door—late again. At the door I leap out and dash out the door and into my transport shuttle.

Inside, I program my shuttle for the tubular exchange station (by pressing Y-4-F-A-S-T) and relax in the leather seat. Seconds later, the navigational computer reports that we are entering the station. I program a switchover to

the tube leading to my education center (by pressing EC 110 which is the code for my education center) and slouched into the chair trying to remember my dream. Finally, I pull into the tube section reserved for my shuttle and get out. Unfortunately, I'm at my education center, New Boston Latin.

IT MADE A DIFFERENCE

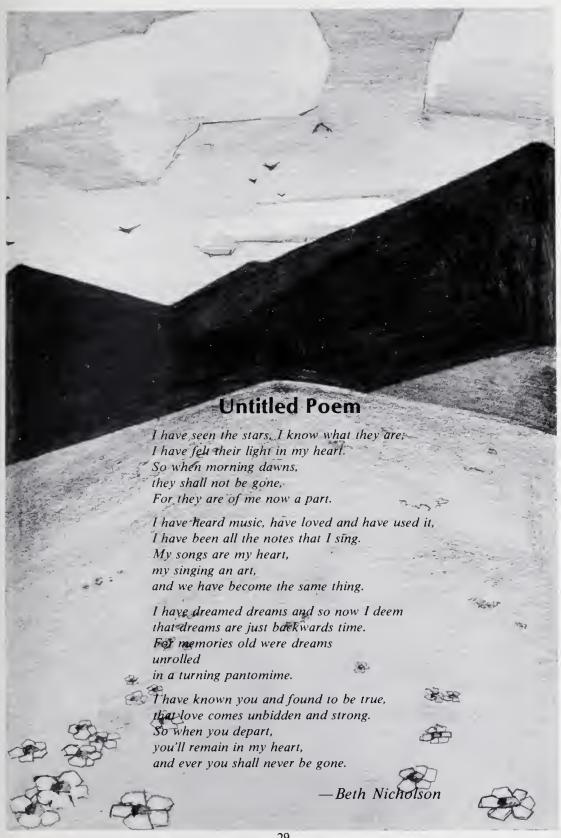
We could have had a lifetime but no, you couldn't share.
We could have had a fantasy but no, it gave you a scare.
It's what we could have had that made you tense, and what we didn't have that made all the sense because what we couldn't have — that made the difference.

—Indjá Cheshire

SENIOR YEAR

The dusty-white blackboards, The aged foot-worn floors, The crowded hallways I will see no more. For I am a senior. Leaving this school, Moving on to college To learn more rules. As much as I hated those Dreary classrooms, I will never forget This feeling of doom. I'm going to miss this Hell of a school And I'm going to miss Breaking the rules. I won't forget, When I leave this year, The fun I had In the years spent here.

-Clare Deery



Untitled

by Chris McDonough

It was the not-too-distant future. The headlines jumped out at me as I walked by the newsstand. The *Times* sprang forth and gave me a recap on the previous day's fighting. The *Post* lunged forward with an exclusive on the Navy. The *Tribune* vaulted out and proceeded to tell me all about the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was a very athletic newsstand. All were preparing to be in the army, because, you see, the not-too-distant future was the time of war.

Standing for a moment at that newsstand, I glanced at the *Times'* recap which stated the number of casualties from the previous days' fighting. I was more than slightly appalled. A magazine beside the Times beseeched me to buy it, to read its propaganda, and a special feature: a comparison of our insidious, nefarious, treacherous, lecherous Enemy to us, we so virtuous, so noble, so kind, so upright. I had to decline. For all our virtue, we seemed still as mortal as the Enemy. A poster on the backwall of the newsstand urged me to buy war bonds to help 'our' boys (the italics are mine, perhaps more so than the boys). I giggled with the thought that the only thing to which the purchase of a war bond could help our boys was an early grave. Then I wondered how I could possibly giggle at that, and I couldn't answer.

I walked away from that garrulous newsstand, further down the street, where I met another poster, a worn, yellowed poster. Seeing how I have no prejudices against worn, yellowed posters, I read it. It wanted me to attend an Anti-War rally, which would take place the next evening. I asked it why, why would I possibly want to attend an Anti-War rally. It rattled off some answers, waxing quite ordinary, and summed up its little harangue, saying that I owed it to myself as a wellinformed citizen to attend. Since I wanted to keep all debts clear with myself, I decided to attend and hear the plea for peace. The poster's arguments were trite, but surely I couldn't expect anything as original as "Help Our Boys! Buy War Bonds!"

I told some friends of mine of my conversation with the worn, yellowed poster, and they decided that they too were well-informed citizens and voiced their intention of attending the rally also. I was pleased, because, you see, it's no fun being well-informed by yourself.

The night of the rally, we packed into my friend's car and drove to it. Upon entering the parking lot, I was amazed at the size of the crowd. That old poster certainly got around! There were people as far as the eye could see, and the eye could see pretty far. I had never realized there were so many well-informed people in our city, but then it came to me in a flash that perhaps somebody, some odious body, had invited some less-than-well-informed people to this rally, but then that didn't matter. I have no prejudices against less-than-well-informed people.

We entered the hall where the rally would be held. Across the front wall of the said hall was a banner proclaiming that war is evil and demanding an immediate end to it. Well, I thought, how can you lose with a cause like that? You certainly won't find anyone to advocate war, and so I thought a little less of this rally than I had before. The banner proclaimed that we were in the presence of "The Brotherhood of the Olive Branch", a fancy name for a society of peacemongers.

I might add that in the not-too-distant future peace rallies were extremely popular. At any given rally, one could meet a plethora of people from all walks of life, and at this one we met people from walks of life of which we had never heard. We had an extraordinary chat with a couple who seemed to make peace their lifetimes' work. They'd been to so many rallies, confided they jokingly to us, they just couldn't remember them all. Seriously. Like, y'know. Somehow I was able to conceal my envy.

We met some young men, preppy in dress, with whom we struck up the most fascinating conversation. They used big words and specific examples. They quoted Emerson, Locke, and the Epistles of Paul. They laughed without showing any teeth. They were fairly high up in the brotherhood, the very same Brotherhood I had decided was oh-so-trite, but I didn't tell them that. Yes, they were very high "mucky-mucks". I said heh-heh, they were the veritable Chief Joints of Staff of Peace. That was a weak joke. I know that because nobody laughed.

So much for impressions.

And so the rally began, and not five minutes had passed when I became, uh, absorbed. The mucky-mucks took the stage, and they cried anti-war chants, and the people in the audience screamed them back. All in all there was a lot of screaming and crying of chants and slogans, of mottos and maxims. It was all rather annoying and loud and unconvincing, to me, that is. But tautologically speaking, it was loud and annoying. The anarchists for peace, I thought.

Mucky-muck #1 wasn't at all annoyed, though, to judge by the complacent look on his face. He yelled over the uproar, that this was Right! The Establishment, he said, must be made to stop! We must serve notice to the insidious, nefarious, treacherous, lecherous government! We must, he said, and the audience screamed, we must! We must make Love, not War! And he ended, whether he wanted to or not, I don't know. I think perhaps he'd gone a bit hoarse. He'd ended, and I was glad. I just can't stand cliches, but then there wasn't much I could stand that night.

Was I glad he ended? His sermon brought forth a tremendous desire in all to make love (not war) and a riot ensued.

I said to my friends, if this were peace they could have it. One of my friends said that I had a funny look in my eye, and then asked me not to cause a scene. But I hardly heard her. I was already making my way toward the stage. I'd had enough hypocrisy! No more; I wouldn't stand for it! My friends screamed at me not to embarrass them. I screamed that the truth couldn't possibly embarrass them. They screamed back that it quite possibly could.

We had screamed a lot, and I wondered in a

flash if I too wasn't a hypocrite. But I quickly resolved that problem: pray nobody'd heard me scream.

The object of my quest was at hand. I mounted the stage, much to the chagrin of the high mucky-mucks. I could tell by the looks on their faces that they were not pleased with me. Me, a radical among radicals, thought badly of? This was another confession from their collected countenances. Oh well, I hear there's no honor among thieves, either.

The rostrum attained, I grabbed the microphone. Funny, I can't quite remember what I said, but everybody was suddenly silent. I think I said something like "sham" or "fraud". I can't quite recall the exact word, but it had the same effect, whichever one I said. Quiet. Like the lull before the storm. That last sentence reeks with foreshadowing, you know.

Assorted insults. No, I'm not some kind of pawn of the Warlords, next question. There I was, trying to make a joke out of it, the whole shebang. Somehow I don't think that was a question. The riot started up again, only this time they had a sacrifice to the God of Peace and Brotherhood. (Aside: the author wishes to point out that neither the Greeks, the Romans, the Assyrians, nor the Norwegians had a god of peace. And neither do we, as the author wishes to further point out. The author regrets this fact. So much for social evolution.)

My situation looked rather bleak. Well, thought I, they certainly can't take constructive criticism, now can they? But I really didn't have much time for such thoughts. The multitudes were advancing, and I took to flight. Luckily there was a back door.

Peace rally! I smiled at this, as I ran like hell.



For You, #1

Read this poem I wrote for you; these words speak my heart.

Though late it is and you and I are time and miles apart.

All these feelings I feel now I feel all the time; it's just that now I have the time to put my heart in rhyme.

You and I, it's you and I, it happened you and I.

What happened? Well, we do not know, but time and fate are sly.

Our story is as old as time; its essence merely blends with aught of yore that has been before: you and I are friends.

All my world is different now, and you have made it so—

the stars, the spring, all things we've seen, the cold and winter snow.

You are you and I am I, but somewhere in between there lies the timeless bond we made by sharing what we've been.

When I look out and see the bridge or climb a well-known stair, when I see flowers, grass or sky or see the subway where we talked and walked and laughed and joked and had to say goodbye all these things are special now, they all are you and I.

To love someone is by far the greatest gift of life, a gift not fully understood, nor free from pain and strife.

To be a friend, to be the overto whom a soul may

To be a friend, to be the one to whom a soul may cry, is to be one where once were two, and it happened you and I.

-Beth Nicholson

Untitled

He heaved a sigh and bade goodbye; Goodbye to Skibbereen. A young man at the train station Lost and found his soul on the same morning.

His town Skibbereen, the earth of his roots. Long had he wandered

through the streets of Irish houses; Errands and deliveries to factories and shops, Hastening to bring home every night's meal; Late evenings' walks on the sidewalk dimly lit in the glow of puddles fresh from the rain. Such was his childhood and adolescence, but Life had been kind to give him the love and warmth of a family.

The train's thundering wheels rolled down the tracks from half a mile away.

It's time to leave now.

Resting had wrapped him in her arms at seven AM.

The call to the awakening world,

The bellow and roar signals him

to travel on lost in his past

and gone are the sights and smells

of familiar people and places.

The young man's gone to find

the new harvest of his future.

Yes, the soil and the land are bound to him.

The train with new recruited soldiers

pulls in at the depot.

On the train the young man shall board to fight, and die, and return to his beloved soil, land and, earth.

—Wendy F. Toy

WATER...

WATER...

OCEAN... exploring the unknown

FLOOD... a reflection of yourself

STORM... confusion deep inside

RAIN... misery, broken into a trillion pieces

TEARS... searching but not finding

DEWDROPS... tears at rest

WATER... uncontrollable feelings ...

-Indjá Cheshire

The Question

Anne Marie Belanger

"Do you want to run this one, or stop for a while?" mumbled Vicky from the stern of the canoe.

"What?" I replied absently.

"Lynne!" she gushed. "You absolutely never listen to me, but then no one cares about a word I say!"

I groaned and glanced up at the sky. Good old Vicky, she was always so dippy that she never failed to cheer me up at the end of a long day.

"Let's run it now," I said. "Or Danny, our faithful counselor, will be back here looking for us."

"Danny, he's so sexy," gasped Vicky, dramatically tearing at her hair.

Our camp counselor Danny is five foot three inches tall, and fifty-six years old. I groaned inwardly at her continuous absurdity, then turned the bow of the canoe into the rapids. For a while, the scenery whizzed by, and our minds were completely occupied with keeping our canoe from smashing into the rocks.

Vicky and I had started camp a week ago, and the New Hampshire wilderness was a pleasant change from the hustle of New York City. New York could be a tough place, but I had always enjoyed it until this past year. Many of our friends were getting into drugs pretty heavily. They thought it was cool, and in a way it was; but it wasn't worth destroying yourself over. Vicky hadn't really seemed to notice any change in our friends, even when they did wild things in school. Maybe she figured that her looniness was rubbing off, but it was hard to mistake their behavior.

The rapids were over and we were drifting along the river toward the shore.

"Oh, wow!" I called back to Vicky, "Look up ahead. What do you see?"

"A fair maiden clothed all in white, standing in scuzzy water full of leeches, with the sun shining through her bleached blonde hair." "Close enough," I laughed, as we drifted toward the other canoe in our group.

"Hey, kiddies!" shouted Danny, "What have you been doing? You're late."

"Vicky was probably telling sick jokes to the mosquitoes. They're the only ones who listen to her." Ginny sneered as she came out of the water with her blonde hair dripping down her face.

"Well," I smiled sarcastically, "What were you doing in the water, Ginny? Weren't you afraid you would wash all your makeup off?"

"No," stated Ginny arrogantly, "I don't mind getting a little messed up. However, as you don't have much in the way of looks, I think you had better be careful!"

As I was raising my canteen over my head to hurl at Ginny, I felt the bow of the canoe sway. I lost my balance and fell into the water.

"What did you do that for?" I gasped at Vicky.

"It isn't nice to smash ugly girls over their heads with canteens," Vicky replied sedately.

"You're right," I admitted, as I grasped the bow of the canoe and pulled it into shore, "I shouldn't waste my valuable time on her."

We unloaded our canoes and set up camp, then I changed out of my wet clothes. It took me longer to set up our tent than I had anticipated, and I was a little late for dinner. As I strolled to the fire, I saw Ginny's face makeup twist into a horrible lump as she formed a smile.

"Just in time for dinner," smiled Danny welcomingly, as he handed me a plate.

"Yeah," began Ginny, "Lynne is always in time for..."

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Vicky.

We all stopped and stared at her in surprise. It was unusual for Vicky to become angry.

"It looks really good, Danny," I began, trying to restore the conversation.

"Danny should cook in a French restaurant," said Vicky as she put down her plate. "I think I'll go to bed early tonight, if you'll

excuse me. I'll tutor you a bit early tonight, Lynne. I want to go to bed as soon as possible," said Vicky as she stumbled off toward our tent.

I frowned and excused myself too. Vicky was always the last person to bed, and she had stopped tutoring me before we came to camp. When I reached the tent, Vicky was asleep. I turned the lights off in the tent, and went to sleep too.

The next day was rather dull. We had a quick breakfast, packed up, and set off down the river. Vicky was being her usual flaky self. She kept ramming our canoe into the other canoe, then winking at Danny. He gave her some surprised, then angry, looks, and told her to stop before she tipped over the canoes and lost all our gear. She stopped, but then started singing, which was almost worse. I was worried about her. She had always been a very good-natured kid, but she was starting to act as if her mind was on a little vacation. When she joked she never did anything dangerous. Ramming canoes was very dangerous.

After about three hours of canoeing, we stopped for lunch. Danny decided to make camp there, and cut the day short to give us a little rest. Ginny, Vicky and I decided to spend the afternoon hiking on a large hill nearby. Vicky left Ginny and me almost at once, to look for Indian Cucumbers to munch on. Ginny and I followed a small path that wound up the hill. Ginny began making polite conversation about the weather and the benefits of Cutter's Insect Repellant. She was apparently trying to be nice, so I restrained my mouth, and didn't say anything nasty to her about the brown nail polish she was wearing.

Suddenly, we heard Vicky calling for help. We ran back down the path and traced the calls to the base of the hill. I kept looking around, but I couldn't see Vicky anywhere. Finally I looked up, and somehow I wasn't too surprised at what I saw. Vicky was standing on a twenty-one foot high ledge, clutching the side of the cliff desperately, and smiling down at us.

"I think I'm stuck," she began, in her most dignified manner, then burst into nervous laughter.

"Why the hell did you climb that high?" I

screamed at her. "Are you some kind of nut?"
"Sorry, darling," she smiled. "I'm afraid I
went up a bit too far."

She smiled angelically, misjudged the width of the ledge she was on, and tumbled off the high ledge and down the slope. Ginny screamed and ran toward Vicky. I just stood dumbfounded. Vicky was lying on the ground perfectly still. I thought that she was dead after a fall like that. Suddenly she sprang out of the pile of pebbles she was lying in, and said calmly, "I screwed that up, didn't 1?"

Ginny and I just stood and looked at her. "You Space Cadet!" yelled Ginny, "You stupid fool!"

She stormed back to camp. I simply stood and stared at Vicky.

"I'm sorry," she said, suddenly looking depressed.

"It's alright," I said. "I'm sorry I snapped at you, but you've been acting so..."

"Suicidal?" she suggested, with a touch of bitterness.

I stared at her in shock. She turned away, and walked toward the bank of the river, and sat down on a boulder by the shore. I followed, and sat down beside her.

"You didn't mean what you said about suicide?" I asked cautiously.

"Of course not," she laughed. "Don't look so worried."

"But what's gotten into you lately, Vicky?"
"You wouldn't believe me."

"Try me."

She turned to me and said seriously, "What if I told you that I was a merry little druggie?"

"Sure," I began sarcastically, then I paused, and thought for a moment.

"So, what if you are?" I asked.

"Would you hate me?"

"No."

"Would you try to reform me, and set me on the path of truth and righteousness?"

"No, you have a right to make your own choices." I said firmly.

"Thanks, Lynne," she said gratefully, standing up.

"Wait a minute," I called, "You aren't really....?"

Vicky smiled, then turned back to camp.

'The Valentine Times'

I can't forget the thing you said,
I heard it when I woke in bed,
down at breakfast, then I read,
'The Globe and Mail' had what you said.

Exclamated, in a blurb, the first and last and middle word. Forget them now? T'would be absurd... I closed my eyes, but all I heard was:

"Think these words when we're not near, think these words, and rest, my dear..."

A roaring blaze inside my ear, to melt away my darkest fear...

I awoke from the dream at quarter to two, four more hours, the paper's due.

I need not read the journal through, the headlines shine with 'I Love You!'

— John Cusack

Untitled

When I was young I entered school And prefered the Art Of Suffering. When I left that place I went to college-To take up my sufferings with Renewed vigor. Upon my graduation, I was married And remained so too many years (An experience which taught me to Love my childhood). When I was old I spent my time (what I had left of it) Giving unwanted, unheeded Advice. And now I am dead. So passed my life-How was yours?

— Anonymous

Belonging

The chill of loneliness
After
Attempted elimination of
Alienation.

Forced words which Fall, empty,
On polite ears,
Whose head nods.

This lesson learned Many times Over, over Again.

-Anonymous

WEEKEND

When the weekend arrives,
Don't bother me.
I've worked hard all week
And worried constantly.
Now I relax and throw away
All my problems so I can play.
Unless you plan to go with me,
Leave me alone and part peacefully.

—Anonymous

BLANK

Do you know how it is to sit at night With a blank page in front of you, And nothing you think of seems just right, No idea rings true?

The thoughts are all in your mind, Floating in interior space; But somehow they can't seem to wind Down to their proper place.

You sigh and feel you will never be able To catch that elusive thread. For you write not your thoughts, but a fable; Not the things you wished to have said.

—Anne Marie Belanger

Untitled

by Rosemary Macedo

His voice was a sharp winter's wind blowing across corn stubble. I reconsidered for a moment, then dismounted. Buck neighed, and pawed under the dry fallen leaves, but the grass was already frostbitten. I searched in my pocket for a candy, gazing all the while at the old man. He gazed back steadily under my examining eyes. Innumerable winters were carved in his face and in his very being.

Even now he made me feel so inexperienced in life, so uneducated, although he'd lived on those same 250 acres his whole life, and could barely write his own name; 1, on the other hand had spent the last 30 years wandering the world, at least half of those years at various universities. Still, 1 felt like more of a newborn babe than 1 was when I had left. At least then I had had the arrogance of youth, for what youth would think he could learn something from his own father?

These thoughts filtered through my mind, jumbled with memories, drawn out for a timeless instant. In the pit of my stomach was that same feeling as when I'd walked in the room to see my drawers heaped in the middle of the floor, my carefully hidden bottle of whiskey in my father's hand, his belt in the other. My dreams of that vast world waiting for me to experience returned, only now they seemed focused through the wrong end of a telescope. The silence became more uncomfortable, then unbearable. It weighed on my shoulders. I had to say something, anything.

"Hello, Dad," I said. I felt naked to the world. I read the slow recognition in his eyes which narrowed for a more critical examination of me. I recalled a sealed letter from a teacher sent thirty years ago, and fear, the kind that makes your hands sweat, took hold of me again.

Again an unbearable silence. Fear turned to panic. Every cell in my body screamed "Run!" Instead 1 remained motionless, wondering at this intense panic I couldn't explain. Still he said nothing. A scream started from my heels,

moving upward, picking up speed and intensifying. It stuck in my throat, stopped by the silence it wished to shatter.

He began walking toward me, his strong farmer's stride hindered by arthritis, infuriating me with its slowness. I searched his eyes, hoping to prepare myself for what must come. He walked past me without meeting my eyes. When he got to Buck he reached up and gave him a cube of sugar which appeared from somewhere deep within his pocket. Finally he turned and met my eyes.

"That's a fine horse, son."

... making love to his tonic and gin —Billy Joel

He sits at the very last booth, away from reality. The dim light overhead throws a shadow on his face, hiding his craggy features. He hovers over a glass, caressing it tenderly. His rough hands envelope the glass, and slowly, with great care, lead it to his mouth. A feeling of warmth comes over him, giving him the only semblance of safety and love he has ever known. The trembling hands lay the glass back on the table. He is now encouraged, the world looks like a much better place. He drinks more and feels still better. Lifting the glass again to his mouth, he can see the bottom — the blurriness of life comes back to him. He is once again alone.

-Joanne Norman



THE MAKING OF A MAN

by Margaret Deacutis

As Mark sat in his cell, he wondered why he had joined the army in the first place. In his Senior year at high school, he had seen alluring posters. He talked to his neighborhood recruiter, who convinced him that the army would make him a man. It would be a great way to learn more about life. Life? Right now, he would rather be dead. It was true that he had brought most of it on himself, but there was no legitimate reason for them to have punished him the way they had this time.

He remembered the first day. When he jumped off the truck, he felt a twinge of regret. He saw men responding to drills like robots. The new men were escorted to an empty section of the field. Mark surveyed the area while their sergeant started roll call. When he came to Mark's name, there was no reply. "Helman!" he called for a third time. "Yo!" answered Mark after a little hesitation. "Helman, I called you three times! Are you living in a world of your own? Another thing: when you answer me, you say 'yes, sir!' but never say 'yo!' I know your type. You feel you're here on a picnic. Well, you'd better change your ideas or I'll make sure you don't even make it through boot camp!"

When the sergeant finished the roll call, he made a typical sergeant speech. Mark could have sworn that he had heard it, or something very like it, before in a movie.

"Men, for the next two months you're going to experience excrutiating pain and anguish. You're going to undergo physical and mental endurance tests. Starting today, no smoking is allowed, nor any consumption of alcoholic beverages. Anyone caught breaking these rules will be punished accordingly."

Two hours later, Mark had a strong desire to light up. Just as he was taking his first haul, the sergeant appeared behind him. Consequently, he spent the next four hours in the cooler, staring at four walls. Two weeks after that, the sergeant caught Mark drinking a bottle of Southern Comfort. Unfortunately, Mark was a little intoxicated and lost his temper. He hit the sergeant, and received a broken arm and three days in the cooler in return.

All the time he was sitting in there, he thought of how much he hated the army. All those advertisements said, "Join the army—it's not just a job; it's an adventure!" So far, he saw nothing adventurous in mopping floors and cleaning johns. From the first day, the sergeant had it in for him. He made sure that Mark got all the dirty jobs. He picked on Mark constantly during the drills. If there was any way he could make Mark's life more miserable, he would find it. Mark kept thinking that someday he would have his revenge, and the sergeant would have his share of abuse.

Somehow he managed to survive boot camp. He got his first weekend furlough. He wanted to visit his family in Boston, but the traveling time alone from North Carolina would take 48 hours. Well, he would suffer the consequences when he returned. The commanders agreed. They were determined that this would be the last unscrupulous act he would commit in an army uniform. When he got back he was faced with an ultimatum. Either shape up into a good soldier, or leave the army with an 'honorable' discharge. He chose the latter.

The day before he was to get out of the army, all sorts of ideas were running through his mind. Why had he joined? What would he do without the skills he had been promised? What would his friends say? But he knew what his friends would say. "Mark Helman is a loser. He's stupid, irresponsible, and lazy." It was quite possible that after this he would not have any more friends.

That night he went beserk. He climbed the fence and was reported as being 'AWOL'. When the sergeant finally tracked him down, he took care of Mark in his usual manner.

Now he sat in his cell, waiting to be court-

martialed for being 'AWOL' just one day before he was to get out of the army for good. He kept asking himself, why did he do it? He had thrown away almost a year of his life by joining the army. Now; who knew how much of his future would be affected by his rash actions?

The Day the Owl Called My Name

"Should a life end so quickly?" Was the question asked of me I replied, but the answer Was not given truthfully.

I pondered on that question For a day or two And came up with the same answer But again, it was not true.

A life is a very precious thing Which is given and then taken away So I pondered on that question For yet another day.

Then one day on a mountain Where I was meant to be, While looking at an owl The answer came to me.

"You should not judge how long A person's life should last. You should only live your life Before your life is past."

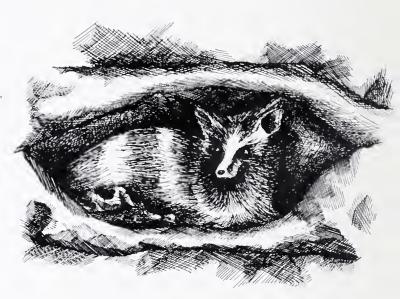
Now I do not try to answer, And you should do the same, For my life has gotten fuller, Since the day owl called my name.

-Karin Lenz

FRIENDS

Friends are forever
If they are true.
Friends never forget
About the real you.
They are there
When you need them
To help you out
And understand
Why you might pout.
Without any friend,
No one is satisfied
Because friends are essential
To everyone's life.

-Anonymous



OUTSIDE

The blue sky,
The fresh air,
Everything alive.
I wish I were there:
The puffy white clouds
And blooming flowers,
With no stormy clouds
And no April showers.

—Anonymous

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